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CHILDREN'S TEMPTATIONS

REV. G. WAGNER.

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HILDREN'S TEMPTATIONS.

BY THE LATE

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PREFACE.

E words of a Pastor to the "lambs"
s flock will have a peculiar significance
ıose to whom he ministered with such
ionate interest; for whilst he was con-
ing their "temptations" amid much
ness and weariness in a distant land,
as called away to his eternal "rest,"
at to these "little ones," most espe-
, he "being dead yet speaketh."

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The Temptation to Forget God.

JEREMIAH II. 32.

"My people have forgotten me days without number."—JER. ii. 32.

I HAVE spoken to you already, my dear reader, about children's *wishes* and children's *thoughts*. Let me now speak about something else which you ought to understand and guard against—I mean children's *temptations*.

Do you know what the word "temptation" means? It signifies trial. You remember, I dare say, a holy man whom God is said to have tempted. You will find it Gen. xxii. 1,—"And it came to pass after these things, that God did *tempt* Abraham." You must not think that God wished Abraham to do what was wrong. God never leads any one to do what is sinful. See what St James says, (ch. i. 13,)—"Let no man say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of *God*: for God cannot be tempted with

evil, neither tempteth he any man: b every man is tempted, when he is draw away of his own lust, and enticed." Go is quite holy, and hates all sin; and s He can never lead any one to commit it What does it mean, then, when it says, that God did *tempt* Abraham? It means that God *tried* him; not to lead him to do what was sinful, but to strengthen him in doing what was right and pleasing to God. Does God still tempt people? Yes, in this way He does;—He will try you, dear child; He will place you in circumstances of temptation; place you, perhaps, in the midst of those who do not fear God—and why? That He may prove your heart, to see whether you love Him or no. God tempted Job, when He sent him so many trials, and took away from him all his children and property: but it was all for his good. God put Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the midst of temptation, when He sent them to dwell amongst heathens, who bid them worship a great image—but it only shewed

how faithful they were to God. God tempted Daniel, when He raised him to power in Babylon, and the king made a decree that no one should pray for thirty days to any one but to himself. So you see God does very often tempt His people, but it is all for their good. But there is some one else who tempts us besides God. Satan tempts us. He would tempt us, and our own sinful hearts tempt us. And why? Not as God does for our good, but to draw us away from God, and to ruin our souls. So Satan tempted Eve, as St Paul says, (2 Cor. xi. 3,) "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." So, also, he tempted David. Turn to 1 Chron. xxi. 1,—"And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel." And so, also, he tempted Jesus, as you will see if you turn to Matt. iv. 1,—"Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be *tempted* of the devil."

Now I hope, my dear child, that you clearly understand the difference between God tempting us and Satan tempting us. God tries us in love—Satan tempts us in envy and hatred, and wishes to bring us into his own condemnation. Perhaps at some future time, if we are spared, I may speak to you about the ways in which God tempts us. For the present, however, I will tell you about the ways in which our three great enemies, the world, the flesh, and the devil, tempt us to sin against God.

Then, if you will look at the text, you will see, I think, what kind of temptation it is about which you will learn to-day. It is about *forgetting* God. There are *four* points to be explained. First, What it is to forget God. Secondly, How the young are often led to forget Him. Thirdly, Why they forget Him; and, lastly, The sin and danger of forgetting God.

First, then, Do you understand, dear reader, what it is to forget God? Perhaps there is some little child here, who is say-

ing within herself, "I do not forget God. I say my prayers every day, and go to church every Sunday." Is this enough? Oh no, I am afraid that there are many people who say their prayers every day, and come to church, and yet they forget God. Suppose, now, that you were to talk to your father or mother in the morning, and were to tell them how very good you would be, and then, throughout the day, you were scarcely to think what they wished you to do, but only try to *please yourself*, would not this shew that you were very forgetful of your parents? And so, if you speak to God sometimes, and have occasionally some thoughts of Him, yet if you do not try to please Him every day and hour, and in every thing that you do, *then* you *forget* God. Do not think then, dear child, that it is enough to have *thoughts* of God sometimes. Why, wicked people have many thoughts of God, and cannot keep Him out of their minds, and yet they *forget* God. To remember God, is to set Him before us,

and to endeavour to please Him in all our ways. Shall I tell you a story about a little girl who forgot God when she was very young? She had good parents, who used to talk to her about Jesus, and she used to say her prayers every night and morning, and so she thought herself a very good little child. Perhaps her parents thought her a good little child also, but her little heart was full of vanity; she was so pleased with herself. But I hope you know that holy children are not pleased with themselves, and do not think themselves good, but feel that their hearts are very sinful. All this time she *forgot* God, although she *did* pray, and hear about Jesus. Perhaps you would like to hear how she was led to remember God? One day she went out for a walk with a servant. As they were walking along, they met an old woman near a cottage door. The servant stopped and began to talk to her. Can you guess about what they talked? It was not about their work, or about their neighbours, or about

their troubles. It was about Jesus. The little child wondered that they should love to speak about Him. When they left off talking, and were about to part, the old woman took the little child's hand and said to her, "My dear child, make the Lord Jesus your friend now that you are so young; and when you come to be as old as I am, He will never leave you nor forsake you." The Spirit of God wrote these few simple words on this little child's heart. She walked home in silence by her nurse's side. She thought how many days she had forgotten God—how she had read about Jesus in the Bible, and soon grown tired of it—how she had heard the minister preach about Jesus, and wished the sermon to be soon over. She remembered how little she had ever thought of Jesus, and all that He had done for her. Then she was not pleased with herself any more. She felt that her heart was wicked, so she tried to be good, that Jesus might be *her* friend; but the more she tried to

make her heart good, the worse it seem to get. So *then* she prayed to Jesus to have mercy upon her. Her prayers were heard. One day she read those beautiful words, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" *You* know who is the Lamb of God, but this little girl did not know; so she asked her father, and when she heard that it was Jesus, and that the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin, she was so happy. From that time she was very different. Once, indeed, afterwards she forgot God, but God did not forget her, and brought her safe to heaven.

Dear child, have you forgotten God? Oh, pray that you may remember Him.

Secondly, Let me explain how the young are often led to forget God. Very often it is in consequence of their associating with bad companions. Nay, there are who, in early childhood, remember God, and love to pray to Him; but when they attain the age of seventeen or eighteen, that age of temptations, they form some foolish friend-

ship with a frivolous lover of this world. They do not see any danger. The pleasures of the world seem to be very harmless. Meanwhile, early impressions pass away—prayer is almost given up—God is forgotten for days together—the thoughts are full of vanity—the heart becomes hardened. Oh, how sad it is to see those, whose hearts seemed to be changed, turn away from God to the world, and go down to the gates of death without any sure hope of heaven! But so Solomon has said, (Prov. xiii. 20,) "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but the companion of fools shall be destroyed."

There was once a young man, who fell from the mast-head of a large ship in a storm. He broke his arm, and it was cut off. He was obliged to leave the Navy. Some of his relations lived in a parish where there was a devoted clergyman and many earnest Christians. His heart soon seemed to be touched by the grace of God. He taught in the Sunday-school—loved the

society of religious people, and was so fi
of joy, that he often wished to die that l
might be with Christ. Some time after, l
went to London to visit some relation
They were very worldly people. First the
took him to balls. His conscience mad
him unhappy, but he gave way. Then they
took him to theatres; still he went, though
he knew better; and so his holy and happy
feelings soon left him. He forgot God—
forgot all that Jesus had done for him, and
fell gradually into very dreadful sins; and
when I met him some years afterwards his
heart was as hard as an adamant stone.
He had no wish to pray—no wish to repent
—no wish to go to heaven. He had be-
come the companion of fools, and so en-
tirely forgot his Maker and his Redeemer.

My dear child, never, never form friend-
ships with those who love the pleasures of
the world. You cannot love their society
and remember God too. You will be
tempted to do so some day. When that
time comes, remember these words of warn-

ing. Oh, go not with them. Let those who love God be your friends, and then you are more likely to remember Jesus, and Jesus will remember you when He comes in His kingdom. You see now how the young are often led to forget God.

But, *thirdly*, Why do we so easily forget God? Can you tell me? People say, "I have not got a good memory." Is this the reason that we forget God? Oh no. For there are many things which we never forget. We do not forget to eat—we do not forget to sleep—we do not forget the things which we love. Children do not forget their play; and if we can remember all these things, then our memories must be good enough to remember God. And so God says, "Can a maid forget her ornaments, and a bride her attire? yet my people have forgotten me days without number." If people remember such little things as ornaments and dress, oh, how much more ought they to remember God! Why, *then*, do you forget Him? It is be-

cause you do not love Him. You remember the friends whom you love—you remember how many pieces of silver you have in your pocket, because you value them. If you forget God, it is because your heart is hard and sinful—because you love other things better than God. And Jesus says, (Matt. vi. 21,) "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Lastly, dear child, It is very sinful and dangerous to *forget* God. It is enough to quote one text to shew this. Turn to Ps. ix. 17,—"The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that *forget* God." What a dreadful thing to be shut out from heaven—to hear Jesus say, "I know you not," and to lose our souls for ever! Yet it is not only those who fall into outward sins, but those who *forget* God, who will have this fearful doom. Oh never, then, dear child, think it a small thing to *forget* God. When Satan tempts you to forget God, resist him. Fly to Jesus, and try to remember God. Remember Him

now in your *youth*, as Solomon says, (Eccles. xii. 1,) "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." Remember Him in the night season, as David did, (Ps. cxix. 55,) "I have remembered thy name, O Lord, in the night." Remember Him when you first awake, as Jacob did, (Gen. xxviii. 16,) "And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place." Remember God when you are in trouble, as the Israelites did, (Ps. lxxviii. 35,) "And they remembered that God was their Rock, and the high God was their Redeemer." Remember the great love of Jesus, as the Church says, (Song of Solomon i. 4,) "We will remember thy love more than wine." Remember all the beautiful words which Jesus spoke, as St Paul says, "Remember the words of the Lord Jesus." Remember all this, my dear reader, and then what a holy, happy child you will be—happy now, and happy hereafter.

The Temptation to Distrust God.

PSALM LXII. 8.

"Trust in Him at all times."—Ps. lxii. 8.

Do you not like to be trusted, my dear child? Do you not like your parents to trust you with money, and to be quite sure that you will spend it as they wish—to trust your word entirely, and to feel quite sure that you would never tell a lie? I think you must like to be trusted. If you do not care about it, I am sure that there is something very wrong in you. There are two things which I like very much. Shall I tell you what they are? The one is to "trust others," and the other is to be "trusted myself." It is a sad thing when a king cannot trust his subjects. This is the case with the monarch with whom we have been fighting—the Emperor of Russia. He gives them large sums of money to fortify their towns; they spend part of it in fortifications, and put part into their own

pockets, and so many of their towns are badly fortified. It is still more sad when a parent or teacher cannot trust his children. There was once a good man, who was the head-master of a large school. Whenever it was possible, he used always to trust his boys, and believe what they said. Whenever he found a boy out in telling a lie, he punished him very severely; but this was not often. His boys liked to be trusted. They used to say, "It is a shame to tell our master a lie; he always believes us." And so some bad boys told him the truth. The master liked to trust them, and they wished to be trusted. He was a much happier master than many, because he could trust many of his boys, and they could trust him.

Now, if you wish to be trusted, dear reader, what kind of a child must you be? Perhaps you say a "good child." Yes; but what do you mean by a "*good* child?" Let me ask you, Do you trust in a person who does not love you—who is often angry with you, and scolds you? I think you

will say "No; I like people to *love* me." Can you trust a person who has told you many lies, and deceived you very often? No; you cannot trust such a person; we can only trust those who are honest and truthful. Can you trust a person who is very changeable—who seems to care for you one day, and not to care for you the next? No; a person must be constant and faithful. If, then, you wish to be trusted, you see, my child, what you must *be*. You must be an *affectionate* child; you must love your parents and teachers; you must be *truthful;* you must always *love the truth*, and *speak the truth*. And you must not be changeable, but be constant in your love. Then people will say, "I know that I can trust that dear child's love; I know that I can believe what he says; I know that he will be faithful and constant." Now, when I thoroughly trust a friend, I do not want him to tell me every day that he loves me; I know he does, and this is enough. Sometimes, perhaps, he may do things which I

cannot quite understand; still it does not trouble me, for I feel sure that it is all right: I trust him. And if he is far away from me, and does not write to me, I do not suspect him to be changeable, for I trust the constancy of his love. It is a great blessing to have such a friend—one in whose love, truth, and faithfulness we can always *trust*.

You like, then, my dear child, to be *trusted*. It pains you if some one suspects you of not speaking the truth, or of being inconstant in your love. Can you tell me of any one else who likes to be trusted? Perhaps you will say "Yes; my mother likes to be trusted." Others will say, "My teacher likes to be trusted." But it is some one greater than your mother or your teacher—it is *God* himself of whom we are speaking. Does God like to be trusted? Yes. There is nothing that the great God values so much as the *trust* even of a little child. But may we trust in God—God is so great, and we are very little? Oh yes;

little things often trust in great things. See a little babe carried in its mother's arms. It is not afraid of falling. It trusts in its mother's care. A wild, little bird will not come near you; it will fly away in a great fright; but a tame, little bird, which you have treated with kindness, will come near you. It will, perhaps, fly out of its opened cage and settle upon your head. You could kill it in a moment, but it is not afraid of being killed. It *trusts* in you. But how can we *trust* God, who seems so far away, and whom we cannot see? Many of you, dear children, live far away from this place; perhaps your parents are hundreds of miles away—it might be in Scotland, or, further still, in India; but do you love and trust them *less* because they are out of your sight? Oh no. You often think of them, and love to hear about them; and so, though we cannot see God, we may *trust* in Him. Besides, though we cannot see God, He is always near us; as David says, (Ps. cxix. 151,) "Thou art

near, O Lord." He always sees us, as read, (Prov. xv. 3,) "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good."

We tried just now, dear child, to explain to you what you must *be* if you wish to be trusted. You must be *affectionate*—you must be *truthful*—and you must be *constant*. This must be your character. Now, God wishes us to trust in Him. What, then, is God's character? Is it such as to lead us to trust in Him? Oh yes, it is. What was the first thing that we said you must be—do you remember? Will people love and trust you if your heart is cold and selfish? Oh no. You must be *warm-hearted* and *affectionate*. Now, look at God. What does the Bible say that God is? Vengeance? justice? wrath? No, love. (1 John iv. 8,) "God is love." And you can tell me, I am sure, how God has shewn His love, His great love to us. Read the 9th and 10th verses of the same beautiful chapter,—"In this was manifested the love

of God toward us, because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Do not misunderstand me, my dear child. God is just, but not justice. He is angry with the wicked every day, yet not *wroth*. There are some on whom He will take vengeance, the impenitent and unbelieving, yet He is not vengeance. No; all this is His *strange* work. He *himself is love*—not only *loving*, but *love—perfect love*. You feel your hearts drawn out towards those who love you. You like to trust them; why, then, should you not trust God? Even the love of your father and mother is not so great as His love. Oh trust *Him*, dear child.

But what else did we say that you must *be* if you wish persons to trust you? You must be *truthful*—you must never tell a lie. It is impossible to trust a liar. Now, God is truth; He never lies, and never will

deceive those who trust in Him. See what St Paul says, (Rom. iii. 4,) "Yea, let God be true, but every man a liar." And again, (2 Tim. ii. 13,) "He cannot deny himself." And again, (Tit. i. 2,) "God, that cannot lie." And again, (Heb. vi. 18,) "That by two immutable things," that is, His word and His oath, "in which it is impossible for God to lie." Remember, too, what Jesus says that He is, "The truth."—"I am the way, the truth, and the life." Ask, dear child, those who have trusted in God, whether they have found His word to be sure, and they will all say with one voice, Yes, oh yes. Ask David. What does he say? (Ps. xciii. 5,) "Thy testimonies are very sure." Ask Paul. What does he say? (1 Cor. i. 9,) "God is faithful." Ask John. What does he say? (1 Eph. v. 9,) "If we receive this witness of men, the witness of God is greater." He means, If we believe what men say, though too many do not speak the truth, how much more should we believe God, who is truth!

Read, then, your Bible, my dear reader, and, when you read it, always remember that God is true. Say to yourself, I may trust His promise, for it is God who speaks it, and God is true.

But there is one thing more that you must *be*, that others may trust you—you must be *constant*. You must not waver and change. If God were to change, would we trust Him? Oh no! But we may trust Him, because He does not change. *We* change; God is always the same. The same now as the day when you were born;—the same now as He was six thousand years ago. If you will turn to Mal. iii. 6, you will see what God says of Himself,—"I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Or that, (James i. 17,) "Every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of light; with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." Or see what St Paul says of Jesus, (Heb. xiii. 8,) "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday,

to-day, and for ever." If then, dear child, God is love, God is true, God is unchangeable, oh, should we not trust Him at *all times?* Must it not be very wicked to distrust God? For if we do distrust Him, it is as if we said, "God is not love—God is *not* true—God is not unchangeable."

Now, you know that Satan tempts us to think and do a great many wicked things. Some he tempts to tell lies—some he tempts to steal—others he tempts to quarrel. But there is *one* thing which he is very anxious to make us *all* do, whether we are young or old, true Christians or not, and that is, to *distrust* God. When God sends us some trial, and we are very unhappy, Satan whispers, "God does not love you." When our wicked hearts wish to do something wrong, but we feel afraid to do it, Satan says, "Do it, do it; God will not punish you; His Word is not true." This was the way that he tempted poor Eve to distrust God. "Yea," said Satan, "hath God said?" as much as to say, "Oh, He could not have

meant that." Or sometimes, when we are in trouble, he whispers, "It is useless to wait for God to help you—help yourself out of your trouble. Do something wrong to get out of it." Do you remember any one whom Satan tempted in this way? Perhaps some of you will say, "I know: it was Jesus Christ." It was when Jesus was in the wilderness with the wild beasts. He had tasted no food for forty days and forty nights, and was very hungry. Do you remember what Satan asked him to do? It was to turn some stones into bread, that He might remove the pangs of hunger. Was it wrong to do so? Yes, for it would have shewn *distrust* of His Father's care. Oh, how often, and in how many ways, does Satan tempt people to distrust God, and to do something sinful to get out of trouble! One little boy has done something wrong, and is afraid of being punished. Then Satan whispers, "Conceal it by all means; tell a lie, if necessary. In that way it will never be known." Oh, that is distrust of

God. If a little boy trusts in God, he will confess his fault rather than tell a lie. Another little boy is very poor—he is in want of food—what can he do? Satan says, "Take something that does not belong to you. It will never be found out." Some children yield to Satan's temptation. Would a little boy who trusts in God do so? Oh no; he would say, "Get thee behind me, Satan; my heavenly Father will take care of me."

There was once a little boy who was put into prison for stealing. After a time he was let out. But what could he do? He had no home to go to; no parents to provide him with clothes and food. He tried to get work, but no one would employ the young thief. He wandered about the streets of London without a friend. As he was walking very unhappy and desolate, the thought came into his mind, "I will commit some crime, and so get into prison again. *There* I shall at least get food and shelter, and I shall be able to read the

Bible and see whether there is any hope for me." Oh, had he acted on this wicked thought, he might have been lost for ever! But God delivered him out of this great temptation. The chaplain of the gaol told the poor little outcast to go to a good man who laboured to save these sons of sorrow. The poor boy had not much hope; still he thought that he would go; and as he went, he thought within himself, oh, if God sends me deliverance, I will not rest until I have made God my friend, and forsaken my sins. He came to the missionary's door, and prayed, before he knocked, that God would incline his heart to help him. The missionary received him with fatherly kindness, and encouraged him to wait on God. The poor boy now felt that he had a friend, and thought no more of committing a crime. Very soon after he got a little work. But he found something even better than this. Can you guess what it was?—it was Jesus Christ. He found Christ, and in Jesus the forgiveness of sins and a new heart. Some

time after, he died, and his last words to the missionary were, "Had I not met you, I should now have been the wretched inmate of a felon's cell. Praised be the Lord for His goodness, and may He return your kindness in manifold blessings upon yourself and others."*

My dear child, whatever your trouble may be, always pray, and trust in Jesus. Trust in Him at *all times*, for at all times God is able to deliver us. Daniel trusted in God, and God delivered him from the lions. Jonah trusted in God, and God saved him out of the whale's belly. Paul trusted in God, and the venomous serpent could not hurt him. Whenever you are tempted to distrust God, often think how God delivered *them*, and pray to Him to save *you*. Do not trust in money, for it is written, (Prov. xi. 28,) "He that trusteth in his riches shall fall." Do not trust in your own heart, for it is also written, (Prov.

* "The Sorrows of the Streets," p. 14. By M. A. S. Barber.

xxviii. 26,) "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool." Do not trust in man, for God says, (Jer. xvii. 5,) "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man." But trust in the Lord with all your heart. Trust in His mercy, (Ps. lii. 8;) trust in the covert of His wings, (Ps. xci. 4;) trust in His arm, (Isa. li. 5;) trust in His word, (Ps. cxix. 42.) Then God will be your buckler, (Ps. xviii. 30;) your shield, (Ps. cxliv. 2.) God will be merciful to you, (Ps. lvii. 1.) He will keep you in perfect peace, (Isa. xxvi. 3.) For the prophet Nahum says, (i. 7,) "The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in Him."

Temptation to Limit God.

PSALM LXXVIII. 41.

"And limited the Holy One of Israel."—
Ps. lxxviii. 41.

I HAVE spoken to you, my dear children, about two temptations. Do you remember what they are? The first was the temptation to *forget* God, the second was the temptation to *distrust* God. To-day I wish to speak to you about another temptation — the temptation to *limit* God. Now, many little children do not know, I am quite sure, what kind of a temptation that is. What does that word "limit" mean? If you will pay great attention, I will try to explain it to you.

Suppose, now, that you had a nice large piece of ground—what would you have in it? Perhaps you would sow one part of it with wheat, and watch it as it grows up. In another part you would like to have grass, and see your little lambs frisking

about upon it. But near your piece ground there is another piece belonging some one else, and he has sheep and cat too. Now, suppose his sheep and cattl were to come into your nice grass, and ea it up—what would you do? One chil will say, "Drive them out again." Yes you might do so; but, perhaps, if you grass was very good, and his cattle like the society of your cattle, they might com back again. What would you do then Perhaps you would say to your neighbour "You must not let your sheep come int my nice grass." Now, if he were a just an kind man, he would keep his cattle out but supposing that he was not just or kind and still let his sheep come into your grass what would you do to keep them out Shall I tell you what you might do? You might put up a fence, or build a wal between your ground and his ground, an then your grass would be quite safe. Now if you did so, that would be to set a limi *or a boundary* to your neighbour's ground

To *limit* anything, then, is to set *bounds* to that thing.

Again. You have heard a great deal, I daresay, about the dreadful war in which we have been engaged. Why did we fight with the Emperor of Russia, and kill so many of his men, and lose so many of ours? Because he wished to seize Constantinople; and if he had once got that city, he would soon have seized Persia, and then he could have attacked India; and so covetous and ambitious was he, that he wished to have it all. But God punishes ambition; and so, in dependence upon Him, we said, "Russia must not have Constantinople, and destroy the Turks. We must not let him do so. We must *limit* or set bounds to his ambition." I say *we*, but it is not *we* alone, but God, through us, who has limited Russia's power and ambition.

Do you understand now, dear children, what limit means? It signifies to "set *bounds* to anything." When God placed

the sand for a bound to the sea, by a perpetual decree that it cannot pass it, as we read (Jer. v. 22), then, we may say, He *limited* the sea.

Now, there are a great many things which *we* do not know, because we are very ignorant. And there are a great many things which *we* cannot do, because we are so weak. And there are many things which *we* might do, and yet neglect to do them, because our hearts are so sinful. For instance, we might be more kind and merciful to others than we are. And so, feeling this, we are tempted sometimes to think that there are things which God does not know, which God cannot do, or will not do, though He has promised them. And when we have such thoughts of God, we *limit* Him. Do you see clearly how we may limit God? If your father and mother were not to teach you, then they would *limit* your *knowledge;* or if they would not let you do something which you wished *to do,* then they would *limit* your *power.*

But we cannot limit God's knowledge in that way, nor can we hinder His power. The way in which Satan tempts us to limit God, is in *our own thoughts* — to have *wrong thoughts* of God's knowledge, power, and love. Let me try to explain this.

There was once a holy man, whom God told to lead a great many people out of one land into another. They had been very unhappy for a long time, because they were cruelly treated; and it was a rich and beautiful land into which God promised to lead them. But the way was long and dreary. It was not through green fields, where they could get plenty of corn and cattle, or near cities, where they could buy food, but through a wilderness, where there was no corn, or cattle, and scarcely any water? How could they get food? It has been very difficult to feed our troops in the East, though they have scarcely ever exceeded fifty thousand men. But here in this wilderness there were six hundred thousand *men, besides* women and children. It was

only God who could feed so many. But He promised to do so. Sometimes the people believed God's promise—and then they were happy. But sometimes they thought that even God could not feed them. If you look at Ps. lxxviii. 19, 20, you will see what they said—"Can God furnish a table in the wilderness? Behold, he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can he give bread also? can he provide flesh for his people?" And even Moses himself once doubted, as you will see if you turn to Num. xi. 21, 22, "And Moses said, The people, among whom I am, are six hundred thousand footmen; and thou hast said, I will give them flesh, that they may eat a whole month. Shall the flocks and the herds be slain for them, to suffice them? or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, to suffice them?" Oh! what did they do when they had such thoughts? They *limited God's power*. They thought that God could do *one thing*, but not another, whereas God

can do everything. What did God say to Moses? "Is the Lord's hand waxed short? thou shalt see now whether my word shall come to pass unto thee or not." It *did* come to pass. God fed the Israelites, not one month only, but forty years in the wilderness.

Do people still limit God's power? Yes. Suppose a dear child were in great difficulty and danger—suppose she were to say, "My father and mother cannot help me now—no one can help me now—I am beyond the reach of help!" would this be right? Oh no, it would be to forget the *power* of God — what wonderful things God's *power* has done. He has shewn His power over *water*—for He led His people through the Red Sea, as on dry land. He has shewn His power over *fire*. Do you remember how? I think you will say, "Oh yes, when he delivered Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego out of the burning fiery furnace, and not one hair of their heads *was singed*." He has shewn His power

over *lions*—for He shut the lions' mouths when Daniel was cast into their den. He has shewn His power over *serpents*—for one fastened on the hand of St Paul, and did him no harm. He has shewn His power over *sickness*—for He has restored many sick people to health. And He has shewn His power over *death*. You can tell me *how*, cannot you, dear child? "Oh, it was when He raised His own beloved Son from the grave." If ever, then, you are in difficulty or danger, remember the *greatness* of God's power. With Him all things are possible. Pray to Him, then; never think it is useless to pray.

But there is another way in which Satan tempts us to limit God's power. It is a good thing for a grown-up person, and for a little child too, to feel that he has a wicked heart. A little girl was once heard to cry out, "Oh, my heart, my heart! It is quite lame—it will not go in good ways." One day she went into a garden—there she saw *a rose, and* smelling it, she said, "I wish

my heart sent forth such a good smell as that." Then she began to dig, and whilst digging, she cried out, "Ah! this ground is just like my heart, dry and hard." How much that little child thought about her heart! Is there any child here who feels that his heart is very *wicked*, and very *hard?* I hope there is. For if you do not feel it, you cannot be taught by the Holy Spirit. Now, some people, when they begin to feel how very wicked and hard their hearts are, think within themselves, "Oh, what shall I do—nothing can ever change this wicked heart, nothing can ever soften it." Is it right to think so? Oh no! It is to limit the *power* of God. See what God's Word says, (Isa. lix. 1,) "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither is his ear heavy, that it cannot hear." See what it says of the precious blood of Christ, (1 John i. 7,) "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." Yes, even if our "sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow;

or red like crimson, they shall be as wool." See again what God has promised to do by His Spirit, (Ezek. xxxvi. 26,) "A new heart will I give you; and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh." Do not, then, limit the power of God—it is Satan who tempts you to do so. Take your heart, however wicked and black it is, to Jesus, and He will sprinkle it in His own blood, and make it white.

But is it God's *power* alone that Satan tempts us to limit? Oh no, he also tempts us to limit his *mercy* and *love*. Perhaps you feel "God *can* change my wicked heart. I know *that*, because He can do everything. But I do not feel that He is willing to do it." Oh yes, He is just as *willing* as *able* to save to the uttermost. Once a poor man went to Jesus and said, "Lord, if thou *wilt*, thou canst make me clean." What did Jesus say? "I *will*, be thou clean." "*I will*"—beautiful words! Do you want

pardon? Go to Jesus, for He says, "I will." Do you want a new heart? Go to Jesus, for He says, "I will." Do you want a gentle, meek spirit? Go to Jesus, for He says, "I will." Do you want to have the power and love of sin taken away from your heart? Go to Jesus, for He says, "*I will.*" Do you wish not to be afraid to die? Oh, carry your fear to Jesus, that He may take it away, for He says, "I will;"—not only "I *can*"—but "I *will.*" "Him that cometh unto me, I will in nowise cast out."

But there is still another way in which little children sometimes limit God's love. They think in their hearts, "Oh, I am such a little child—the *great* God cannot care for me yet; when I grow bigger, then perhaps He will care for me." Is it true that Jesus does not care for little things? Oh no! A shepherd cares for the little lambs of the flock; indeed, he takes the most care of them, because they are so very weak. He drives the big sheep before him, but he often *carries* the little lambs. And Jesus,

the Good Shepherd, does so too. You know, my dear children, where the Bible tells us so. You will find it in Isa. xl. 11, "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." And you remember how sweetly Jesus said, when He was on earth, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." The least child, then, in this church may go to Jesus. Since my last sermon, dear children, a sweet little child has been taken away, I hope and believe, to heaven,—Anne Clarke, the eldest child of my beloved brother in Christ and the ministry. She was scarcely six years old. Perhaps some of you knew her by sight. Her mother used to take her to hear children's sermons, and she loved them very much. She never limited God, or doubted His love. Her father told me that her simple trust in God was very

You know that little children when they are healthy grow bigger and bigger. Well, this sweet child grew too—but she grew not only in body, but in *grace*. The last year of her short life, she was more thoughtful and obedient than ever. She used to say little prayers out of her own heart. One day, when she was only three years old, she offered up a strange little prayer. She said, "Pray, God, give me some nice new toys." God heard that little prayer. Three or four days after, a gentleman, who did not know anything about her prayer, gave her some beautiful toys. She only prayed once for such things; afterwards, when she grew older, she prayed for better things than toys. She used to love children's missionary meetings very much. Some children spend their money on themselves, but she never got anything for herself. Sometimes she got a present for others, but most frequently she gave what she had to the missionary societies, to send the *gospel to* the heathen. When she was

ill, she used to ask her mother to read the Bible to her. One day she said, "Will you read to me about the little girl who was restored to life?" She meant Jairus's daughter. She was very patient, and did not seem afraid to die. When her mother spoke to her about the love of Jesus, it always seemed to calm her little mind. Just before she died, her countenance brightened up. And even after her soul had left the body, her face looked beautifully calm, with almost a tinge of joy upon it.

O my dear child, do come to Jesus: He is so tender, so full of love, so able and willing to save you from your sins, and give you a new heart. Then you will be so happy. And when you die, your eye will beam with joy, and there will be a sweet smile on your cold lips, and your parents will rejoice whilst they weep, because they will feel that you are gone to heaven.

Do not, then, limit the power or love of Jesus, but trust and love Him with all *your* hearts.

Temptation to be Discontented.

HEBREWS XIII. 5.

"Be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."—HEB. xiii. 5.

IT would have given me great pleasure, my dear children, to have stood as usual in my own pulpit, and to have spoken to you with my own voice. But our kind Father which is in heaven has appointed otherwise: and as I know that He is love, and does all things well, I am quite content; yes, more than content. I am very thankful, that though I cannot see you, God does allow me to speak to you, does bid me pray for you. And I *do* pray, my dear children, that God himself may teach you by His own Spirit to know and love Jesus, and to grow like Jesus.

Some of you, I hope, will remember, that I have been speaking to you lately about *different* kinds of temptation. One was,

the temptation to *forget* God; another was, the temptation to *distrust* Him; another was, the temptation to *limit* Him. To-day we will speak to you about the temptation to be *discontented.* Satan tempts many grown-up people, and many little children, to be discontented.

First, then, let me point out to you some of the ways in which our great enemy tries to make little children discontented and sulky.

Some little children like to have their own way. They wish to go out, when their parents think it better that they should stay in. Or they want to play, when they are told to do their lessons. Or, perhaps, they feel inclined to sit up a little longer, when the nurse comes to fetch them to bed. Their parents say, "Now, dear, do as you are told." But Satan whispers to their hearts, "Your parents are unkind—go out, play, sit up, though it is bed-time; and if they will not let you, cry and *frown, and* be very sulky." Oh, what

naughty thoughts these are! And too often the naughty heart listens to them; and you see the little lips quiver, and the little forehead frown, and the little eye flash with fire, and then fill with tears. Ah! Satan has got the victory. The child's naughty heart is *discontented,* because it cannot have its own way.

Other little children are not pleased when they cannot have all that they wish. They know other children who have nicer books or prettier playthings than they themselves have. First, they wonder how it is—then they covet them—then they grow discontented, because they cannot have them. This was the case with a wicked king, whose name was Ahab. Perhaps you remember what it was that he coveted. Wicked as he was, God had given him a great deal,—beautiful palaces, large gardens, and plenty of money. But Ahab was not satisfied. A poor man lived near him, who had a vineyard. The king longed to *have it*; but the poor man loved it very

much. It had belonged to his fathers, so he would not sell it. This made the foolish king very sulky. Instead of thinking about other things, he thought about nothing but this. And because he could not have it, he took to his bed, and would not eat, and this sin led to another. His wife, who was even more wicked than himself, had poor Naboth killed, that her sulky husband might get up and eat.

When little children are discontented and sulky, because they cannot have what belongs to others, then it is *covetousness* which is the root of their discontent.

Then, again, other children are displeased and discontented when they see a brother or sister more admired and loved than they are themselves. This it was that led Cain to hate his brother Abel: for he saw that God had accepted Abel's offering and not his own. This, too, led the sons of Israel to hate Joseph. They could not bear to look at the coat of many colours—not *because it* was very costly, but because it

reminded them that Jacob loved Joseph better than themselves. What was it that made them so angry and discontented? It was jealousy.

I know a little child who is very jealous. She is only three years old. Whenever her brother or sister come near her mamma, she looks very angry, and waives her hand, and says, "Get away." Sometimes she bursts into a flood of tears. This is very naughty. I hope that God will give her grace to overcome that jealous and discontented temper. Perhaps some of you will pray for her. Will you?

Let me mention only one thing more, which often makes grown-up people and little children discontented. It is when it pleases God to take away from them something which they like very much. There was once a prophet, whom God sent with a solemn message to the people of a great city. After delivering his message, he sat down on the east side of the city to see what would become of it. But the sun was very hot, and caused him great pain in

his head. Do you remember what *God* gave him to shelter him from the scorching rays of the sun? It was a gourd. We read, (Jonah iv. 6,) "And the Lord God prepared a gourd, and made it to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief." Jonah was very much delighted, and quite set his heart upon the gourd. But his joy was very short. For the very next day God prepared a little worm to eat away the gourd's root. Jonah did not see the worm, and little thought that his shelter would so soon fail him. Very soon, however, did the gourd begin to wither, and then the hot sun again poured its scorching beams upon the poor prophet's head, and the dry east wind began to blow, and the burning sand of the desert filled his eyes. Jonah was full of disappointment, he was discontented, and wished to die. Then God came to him, and said, "Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd?" Jonah answered sulkily, *and said, "I do* well to be angry, even

unto death." My dear child, do not set your heart on any earthly thing. For God may send a worm to eat away its root; and when it withers away before your eyes, your heart may feel restless, and discontented, like Jonah's. It is very sinful to murmur, and feel discontented, when God takes something away from us. How often God punished the Israelites for murmuring! Once He sent a great number of fiery serpents among them, and the serpents bit them, and great numbers of the people died. Does not that shew how a discontented heart displeases God? There was once a little boy, who caught a bad cold, and became deaf, when he was about fourteen or fifteen years old. Did he bear it patiently? No! he was an ambitious boy, and wished to make his way in the world. He was also very fond of society. When he became deaf, it seemed as if all his hopes were dashed to the ground,— his gourd was withered, and, like Jonah, he was very angry. One day, when he was murmuring

very much, a good aunt reproved him for it, and told him how sinful it was. Still he did not feel it, but grumbled again afterwards. A few years later, God graciously taught him to know Jesus, and gave him a new heart. Then he saw that it was all in mercy that God had made him deaf. It was to keep him from the snares of this world. He often thanked God for his deafness, and it grieved him to think how discontented he had been, when he ought to have been always resigned and thankful. He saw then that it was very sinful to murmur.

But it is now quite time that I should explain to you, my dear child, what you ought to do when a discontented feeling springs up in your heart.

First, then, when you feel angry and discontented, do not *speak*. For if you speak, you will be sure to say something wrong about God, or something unkind about others. Be quite silent. Satan will *whisper to* you, "Speak." When he does

so, answer him, "No, Satan, I won't speak." But whilst it is a great thing to be *silent*, when you are *angry* or *discontented*, something more is necessary. For there is a bad thought in your heart, and the thing is to get that bad thought out. Can you tell me how to get it out? I think you can. You must go into your little chamber, and kneel down upon your knees, and ask Jesus to forgive your discontented feelings, and to make your heart quite contented and peaceful. And when you pray, you must believe that Jesus hears you, though you do not see Him, and that He is able and willing to take out of your heart all those bad feelings. Jesus *can* do so. Do you not remember how Jesus said to the stormy waves of the sea of Galilee, "Peace, be still!" and when He had spoken, there was a great calm? *You* cannot still the stormy waves, but *Jesus* can do so. And He can just as easily say to your restless and troubled heart, "Peace, be still;" and then you will not be angry or discontented any

more. There will be a sweet calm in your heart.

But if, when you get up from your knees, your heart still feels naughty and discontented, then before you leave your room, wait and think about Jesus. Was Jesus ever discontented? Oh no! never. Turn to Isa. liii. 7 — "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted; yet *he opened not his mouth:* he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." No one ever suffered as Jesus did, and no one was ever so beautifully resigned to His Father's will. You remember how He prayed in the garden of Gethsemane, (Luke xxii. 42,) "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done." Now *we*, my dear children, are called to follow Jesus, and to grow like Him. Should *we*, then, the followers of Jesus, murmur, and be discontented? Oh no! Hear what one *follower of Jesus* could say, (Phil. iv. 11,) "I

have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." St Paul was always content, wherever he was—whether in danger on the stormy sea, or in want of necessary food, or in prison. And why? Because he knew that Jesus loved him, and would never leave or forsake him. Do you remember any one else who did not murmur when God took so much away from him—first his oxen and asses, then his sheep and servants, then his camels, and last of all his children? It was Job. How beautiful were the words which he spoke, when all this trouble came upon him, (Job i. 21,) "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord!"

I was reading, a short time ago, the memoir of a devoted man who went out as a missionary to Bagdad. He had scarcely arrived there before a great many trials came upon him. A dreadful disease, called the plague, which had ravaged a great many towns, came to Bagdad—nearly all

who were seized died. In two months, more than half the inhabitants—that is, about thirty thousand—had passed into eternity. For a time the plague did not attack the missionary's dwelling, and he hoped that God would spare them. But no! his wife was seized, and soon died. Then his little baby was attacked, and soon it also died. Nor was this their only anxiety. Some Arabs came against the wasted city, and fired cannon balls into it. And several times the missionary was almost struck by them. Then the dam of the river gave way; the waters rushed into the city, and carried away seven thousand houses. What did the missionary feel in the midst of all these trials? He *suffered,* but he never *murmured.* Hear what he said—"Why the Lord thus strips me, I do not now see: yet He does not allow me to doubt His love amidst all my sorrows; and I know that light is sown for me, though it does not yet spring up. Oh, may my soul never *cease to* feel assured of my heavenly Fa-

ther's unchangeable love! for with a doubt on this point, dark indeed would my circumstances be."

My dear child, my prayer for you to-day is, that you may be contented and happy, when you are ill, as well as when you are well—pleased with whatever God gives you, and contented whatever He takes away from you. But remember, dear child, that you can only be so happy, when you believe the love of Jesus towards you, and when you love Him more than your dearest companions, and when you carry to Him all your little troubles and wants. No child is too *young* to go to Jesus, and no trouble is too *little* to carry to Him. Come, then, to Jesus, and then your parents and teachers will see no angry frowns and discontented looks.

Temptation to Overlook God's Hand.

EXODUS VIII. 19.

"This is the finger of God."—Exod. viii. 19.

Another month, my dear children, has passed away, and I am again unable to speak to you with my own lips. It is a great trial to me to be so long silent; but still I am very happy, for God has been very good and kind to me, and I feel that it is not by chance that I have been laid by, —"It is the finger of God—the finger of my heavenly Father, and of Jesus, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." Some people never see God's hand in anything. If God sends them *trials*, they take them as a matter of course, and do not believe and feel that it is God who is dealing with them, as we read, (Jer. v. 3,) "O Lord, are not thine eyes upon the truth? thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction."

they have made their faces harder than a rock; they have refused to return." If God gives them *success* in their undertakings, like the king of Assyria they say, (Isa. x. 13,) "By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom; for I am prudent." Or if God sends them many *mercies*, they receive them just as if they deserved them all. (Hosea xii. 8.) Oh, how sad and how sinful this is! Do you know who it is that tempts us to overlook God's hand in trials, in success, and in mercies? It is Satan, our great enemy. Let us watch, dear children, against *this temptation*. If we *do* watch, not one day will pass away without our saying, with submissive and joyful hearts, "This is the finger of God."

Do you recollect who it was who said, "This is the finger of God?" Was it some holy man who said so? No; it was the wicked magicians of the wicked Pharaoh. Perhaps you remember what made them *say so*. God sent Moses and Aaron into

Pharaoh's presence, and enabled them to perform miracles, to prove that they were sent by God, the God of the whole earth. What was the first miracle which they performed? Aaron held a rod in his hand. At God's command he threw it upon the ground, and it became a live serpent. Would you not have been much frightened? I think you would. But Pharaoh, though he was very wicked, did not appear to be frightened, nor did he believe that Moses and Aaron were sent by the true God. What did he do? He sent for his wise men and sorcerers, to see whether they too could not turn pieces of wood into serpents. Do you think that they could do it? If you did not know the history, I think you would say, "Oh no; Pharaoh's magicians could not do *that*." But if you will look at Exod. vii. 11, you will see that they *did* change rods into serpents by their enchantments. How did they do it? Could they do it by their own power? No; it is beyond the power of man. Do you think,

then, that God gave them power to do so? Oh no; God would not give that power to wicked and deceitful men. Who, then, enabled them to work that miracle? It was some one more powerful than man, and less powerful than God. It was Satan. When Pharaoh saw that his magicians could do what Moses and Aaron had done, he hardened his heart, and would not believe in God.

What did Moses and Aaron do next? God told them to take the same rod, and to stretch it out over the waters of Egypt, especially over the river Nile. And when Aaron did so, the waters were turned into blood. Then the people had nothing to drink, and the fish all died. Did the magicians do the same? Yes; they changed some of the water, that was left unchanged, (perhaps on purpose that they might try what they could do) into blood also. And the wicked Pharaoh thought that there was no difference between his servants and the servants of the Most High God, and he hardened his heart again.

Then Moses and Aaron were commanded to bring up a multitude of nasty frogs into the land. These frogs did not stop in the ponds, as our frogs do, but went up into the houses of poor and rich, and even climbed up into their beds and ovens. How disagreeable this must have been! What did Pharaoh do then? Did he repent? No; he told the magicians to do the same, and they did so. How foolish this was, for it only increased the number of the frogs, and made the plague worse. But sin, you see, blinds the heart—it is folly.

But when Pharaoh hardened his heart, another plague became necessary. Aaron stretched out his hand again, and smote the dust of the earth, and it became lice in man and beast. This plague must have been more terrible than the plague of frogs, for it *might* be possible, with some trouble, to get the frogs out of a room, but no one could get rid of the lice. What did the magicians do now? They tried to bring

forth lice, too, but *they could not.* when they failed, they said to Phar "This is the finger of God."

Now, I wish you to see, dear reader, *determined* God is that even the wi should see *His* hand. *They* do not to see it. *They* blindfold their eyes they may not be *able* to see it. Ye some time they *must* see it. God will them sore trials until, wasted and deso they acknowledge God's hand, and "This is the finger of God."

Now, a Christian child does not hid eyes and blind his mind from the fe seeing God's hand. Oh no! he love see the finger of God. Have you n felt your heart throb with joy, when father's or mother's loving hand has laid gently and affectionately upon I think you *must* have felt it. Just so the heart of the Christian child re when he sees the "finger of God" i *little* trials and *great* mercies.

Let me point out now some of the

casions on which you should see the "finger of God." Have you ever been sick? If you have, you found it, I daresay, to be a *trial* not to be able to play, and go out, and to have nasty medicine to take. It is trying, too, to be feverish and thirsty, and to suffer pain. Now, some children grow restless and impatient when they are ill a long time; but a Christian child will try to remember *who* it is that sends the *sickness*. He will say, "It is the finger of God." And he will take all the medicine which is given him *very cheerfully*, however bad it may be. The sickbed of a Christian child is a happy place, for it is not only his watchful mother, but *God himself*, who makes all his bed in his sickness. Jesus watches over the sick child by night and by day. The Holy Spirit descends, like a gentle dove, upon his soul to give him strength and patience. And the beautiful angels, though unseen, guard his bed, and encamp round about him. Some who enter his sick-chamber, and see him

weak and suffering, say, "Poor chil
But when we know how *near Jesus* i
him, and what great things God has d
for him, surely we may say, "Happy chil
"Happy child!" for he sees "the finge
God," and the hand of his gentle Savi
in all his sickness. But perhaps you w
like to hear about one who loved to
"the finger of God." He was a yo
man, not a little child; and he was
sick, but he crushed his hand dreadf
under a large stone. The pain was
great, that when he drew his hand f
under the stone he fainted. He
carried home insensible. As soon as
came to his senses, he lifted up his eye
heaven, and said, "Oh great God, T
hast laid upon me a heavy trial. Bu
will bear it patiently. Oh, do Thou
me strength." In the hope of saving
life, the surgeons determined to cut
some of his fingers. During the pai
operation, he kept on praying, and yiel
up his own will to the will of God.

Whenever, then, dear child, you may be sick, and have to bear pain, remember *who* sends it. Say in your heart, "It is the finger of my God—the hand of my Jesus."

Another trial, which you will have some day to pass through, is the removal of those whom you love to another world. A few years ago, not far from hence, there lived a most devoted Christian. None who saw her once could ever forget her beautiful countenance, beaming with Christian love and joy. So attractive was her loving spirit, that she was the means of winning many, both rich and poor, to Jesus. In the midst of her usefulness she was taken ill, and in order to keep her quiet all her children, except one, were sent away. In a few days, after great suffering, Jesus took her to glory. A day or two after, her husband and sisters consulted together how they might best break the sad tidings to her beloved and loving children. The little boy was in the room, and overheard their conversation—"Oh, say," he said, "that a

beautiful angel has come down to earth, and taken dear mamma to heaven." That little boy saw the "finger of God."

But we have *mercies*, dear child, as well as *trials*, in which we should see the "finger of God."

At this time of the year the wild flowers are very beautiful. Though the winds are still cold, some of them *will* open their white and yellow petals, and they seem to say to us, in a gentle whisper, "Winter is gone, and the bright spring, which we love so much, is coming." Can you tell me, my dear child, of *whom* we ought to think, when we look at those beautiful flowers? Yes, you will say, we should think of the "finger of God." Quite right. There was once a little boy who was only five years old —his father used often to talk to him about the beautiful flowers, and he told him that God made them all. On hearing this the little boy put his hands together, and said, "Oh, what a great and kind God we have." One day he said to his father, "Did God make

my mother and sisters also?" "Yes," said the father. Then the little boy, putting his hands together again, said, "I thank Thee, O God, for my mother and sisters."

But there is another *great mercy*, in which I am very anxious, my dear child, that you should see the "finger of God." Can you guess what it is? I think you can. It is the *peace* for which we have given thanks to God to-day. Who has brought us this great blessing of peace? Some say, "Our brave soldiers; we have reason to be *proud* of their victories." No; not *proud*, but *thankful*. What has God been teaching us in this sad war but that we should "*lie low before Him?*" Never, then, dear child, use, as the newspapers still do, that unchristian and sinful expression, "We have reason to be proud." Our soldiers are indeed nobly brave, and we should *admire* them. They have shewn more than courage, even patience and a truly grand hopefulness in the midst of the most appalling sufferings. England

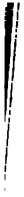
should love, and never forget these, her noble sons; but she should remember, too, that *victory belongeth unto the Lord.* It is *God* who gave them courage in the days of battle. God who gave them patience in the days of suffering. God who inclined the heart of the Emperor of Russia to make peace. God who has given wisdom to the members of the Congress to make so *good* a peace; and, therefore, to *God* we should render thanks. To Him we should say with the Psalmist, (Ps. cxv. 1,) "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake;" and again, (Ps. xcviii. 1,) "O sing unto the Lord a new song; for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory."

Are you thankful, dear children? Then let me ask you to-day to shew your thankfulness by helping to pay off the small debt which still remains on St Stephen's schools. These schools have not been *my* work, but

the work of St Stephen's congregation. And it gives me joy to think how much has been done by the children of this congregation. All the schools attending this church, excepting two or three, were forward to help in it. And we feel no doubt but that the children in those schools would have been glad to have helped likewise, had they been duly encouraged to do so. We do not forget, and shall never forget your readiness both to give and to collect for this work. But on such an occasion as this you may like to give again. And there may be some children here who have not yet had an opportunity of giving anything. Remember, dear children, to whom you belong—it is to God. Remember all the advantages which you receive from God, advantages which those who are poorer cannot have without our help. As in trials and in mercies, so in this opportunity of helping others, you may see the "finger of God."

The Temptation to Look at Things Seen.

2 Cor. iv. 18.



"While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."—2 Cor. iv. 18.

SINCE I last spoke to you, my dear children, by another's voice, it pleased God to bring me very low; so low, that I at one time thought that God meant to take me home to my real and eternal home. But this was not His will. He who brought me low, has graciously raised me up again. Now, shall I tell you, my dear child, what gave me comfort and peace when death and eternity seemed so very near? Was it the sympathy and love of dear relations? No! Their love was very soothing, but they could not speak peace to my soul. Was it any of my efforts in health to advance God's kingdom? Oh no! I felt so ashamed of all, that I could not think of them without praying that God would wash away the

iniquity of my holy things in the blood of Jesus. What, then, was it? It was not, dear children, anything *seen*, anything that *I* could *see* or *you* could *see*. It was something *unseen*—it was *Jesus*. *I* cannot *see* Jesus, and *you* cannot *see* Jesus with the outward eye. Yet I believed Him, and felt Him to be near, and that He was mine, and I was His. *I* cannot *see*, and *you* cannot *see* the rich inheritance which God has laid up in heaven for those that love Him. But I believed that of His great grace He would bring me there, and this gave me joy. Oh! when death draws nigh, dear children, and it will come, and perhaps soon, all the things that are seen will fade away from your sight. And oh! most miserable will you be, if your heart has not been taught by the Spirit to *look* to things *unseen*. Oh! pray earnestly to God to teach *you*, *as* He does all true Christians, to "look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal;

but the things which are not seen are eternal."

Now, there is a word in this beautiful verse which seems to need some explanation. Some little child may say, "May I not look at the flowers, and all God's beautiful works? I must look at them. I cannot help it." Quite true. You may not only *look* at them, but *love* them. The word "look" here means something more than see. Perhaps you could tell me the name of a person who was commanded by God not to look back on a place which she had left. It was Lot's wife. Why did God tell them not to look back? It was to shew them how entirely they were to *give up* Sodom. But *one* did not do so. She *looked* back, and was turned into a pillar of salt. You may think that it was a severe punishment for *one look*. Yes, but that *one look* was disobedience to God. And then there was a great deal in it. It shewed *where her heart was*. She *looked* back, because she wished to *go* back. She

loved the wicked city, and did not like to leave her home.

Now, the same God, dear child, who said to Lot's party, "Don't look back," says now to you, "Don't look at things seen." Do you understand what He means? He means that your heart should not be set upon them—that you should not be led by them to forget God, and those great things which you cannot see.

Suppose, now, that a little boy thinks only of his games, and does not love the Bible and prayer, that boy "looks" at things seen. Suppose that he sees what is right, but is afraid to do it because his companions will laugh at him, then he "looks" at things seen. Or suppose a young person, just entering on life, devotes her thoughts to dress and the pleasures of the world, oh she most certainly "looks at things seen." Or again, if a man makes it the object of his life to grow rich, or to get a name for himself, that man "looks at things seen."

We hope now, dear reader, that you understand more clearly what it is to *look at things seen.* It does not mean to see and observe them, which we may do, but it means to live *in them* and *for them*—to have our hearts influenced by them, and thereby drawn away from God.

Let me tell you an anecdote of a young man who "looked at things seen." Many years ago there was a good man who lived at one of the Italian universities. One day a young man ran up to him with a face beaming with joy, and said that his greatest wish was now fulfilled, his parents having just given him permission to study the law. "So now I am come," he added, "to the law-school of this university on account of its great fame; and I mean to spare no pains to get through my studies as well and quickly as possible." In this way he went on talking for a long time; when at last he came to a stop, the good man, who had been listening to him with great patience, said, "Well, and when you have got

through your course of studies, what do you mean to do then?"

"Then I shall take my doctor's degree," said the young man.

"And then?" asked St Filippo Neri again.

"And then," continued the youth, "I shall have a number of difficult cases to manage, and I shall catch people's notice by my eloquence, my zeal, my learning, my acuteness, and gain a great reputation."

"And then?" repeated the holy man.

"And then," replied the youth; "why then there cannot be a question, I shall be promoted to some high office or other, besides, I shall make money, and grow rich."

"And then?" repeated St Filippo.

"And then," added the young lawyer,— "then I shall live comfortably and honourably, in health and dignity, and shall be able to look forward to a happy old age."

Oh! was not all this to "look at things seen."

But the holy man had not done. Again he asked, "And then?"

"And then," said the youth, with a faltering voice,—"and then,—and then,—then I shall die."

Here St Filippo again lifted up his voice and solemnly said, "And then?"

This last "and then," was brought home by the Spirit to the young man's heart. From that time he ceased to look at things seen. He began to feel the power of things unseen.

Now let me pass on to explain to you what it means to "look at the things which are not seen."

Perhaps some little child is thinking, "How is it possible to see things unseen?" Now let me ask you a question. How do you see "things seen?" You will say, "with my eyes." Yes, our good God who has put us in a beautiful world, has given us eyes that we may see its beauties. Now, if we were to try ever so much, we could not see spiritual things with our two eyes. It is

only with our *spirit* that we can see *spiritual* things. Is there, then, *another eye*, which God gives His people, and which enables them to see things which our outward eyes cannot see? Yes, there is. Now, if you will turn to Heb. xi. 27, you will find it said of Moses that "he endured, as seeing him who is invisible." And if you will look at the first part of the verse, you will see what the eye was with which Moses beheld Him. It was the *eye* of *faith*, or *trust*. Yes, when God changes the heart by His Spirit, and sprinkles it by the blood of Jesus, then He creates in the spirit this *new eye*, which *sees* things *unseen*. Here, then, dear children, you see one great point of difference between worldly people and the children of God. Worldly people have only *two* eyes. The children of God have *three* eyes. The first only look at the things which are seen, which are temporal, whereas true Christians, with the eye of faith, behold the things which are not seen, which are eternal. Oh, what beautiful and glorious

things do the children of God see with the eye of faith! What do they see? They see God. If the world, which God has made is beautiful, oh, much more must God himself be beautiful and glorious! What a great thing then to see God! to know and feel that He is present! that He is my Father in Jesus Christ! to see the greatness of His love in bringing me near to Himself. As St John says, (1 John iii. 1,) "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!" To see His perfect wisdom in all His dealings with me.

Then, too, they see *Jesus*. By faith they see Jesus hanging on the cross, making an all-sufficient atonement for their sins; and they see their sins nailed to His cross. They see Jesus rise from the grave a mighty conqueror over death; and they see Him sitting at the right hand of God. Oh, how happy this makes them! Are they afraid of pain and suffering? No; for Jesus, who knows what suffer-

ing is, sympathises with them? Are they afraid to die? Oh, no; for Jesus, who has conquered death, will pass with them through its deep waters.

Do they see anything more than this? Oh, yes; they see what Jesus calls (John xiv. 2) His "Father's house, in which there are many mansions,"—mansions which Jesus is now preparing for His people. They see what St Peter (i. 4) so beautifully calls "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away." They see what St John calls (Rev. xxi. 2) "the holy city, the new Jerusalem." Oh, how they look forward to the day when they will enter that holy city, and go no more out! Whilst, then, worldly people look only at things seen, the children of God look to things unseen. Those great things which they see with the *third* eye, the *eye of faith*, lead them to be dead to sin, and dead to the world.

We told you just now an anecdote about a young man who looked to things seen,

let me tell you now one or two stories about little children who looked to things unseen.

Many years ago, there lived in Paris a most devoted Christian. She was left, when quite young, a widow, with two or three children. She was very anxious to glorify God; and prayed that God would shew what He would have her do. It ended by her going to a little village in Switzerland, where she led a great number of souls to Jesus. She left Paris in a boat, taking only her little girl, and a nursemaid, whom she had led to Jesus, with her. The little girl was a sweet child. When she was in the boat, she cut out a great number of little crosses, and then fastened them all to her mamma's dress. —The nursemaid said, "Will you not give me a cross too?" "No," said the child, "they are all for mamma." Words almost prophetic; for from that day her mamma was never without trials. She was persecuted wherever she went. Once

she was poisoned; several times she was put in prison—and only because she loved Jesus. Well, when the little girl had finished the crosses, she set to work and made a crown; and putting that on her mother's head, she said, "After the cross comes the crown." Did not that child look to things unseen?

Again. A few years ago, there was a little boy, who was always very weak. His last illness came on when he was only four years old. He suffered very much. One Sunday, his eldest sister, whose name was Margaret, stayed at home to nurse him, and had him on her lap many hours. Once, on looking at him, she saw the big tears rolling down his cheeks. She pressed him to her breast, and said, "I fear, darling child, that you are suffering much." "Oh no," said he; "it is not my sufferings that cause my tears to flow; but it is the love of the blessed Jesus, in taking up little children in His arms and blessing them, which

overpowers me." I am sure this dear boy looked to things unseen.

And now, my dear child, I have a question to ask you; will you pay attention? I wish you to put it solemnly to your conscience, when you place your head upon your pillow this night. The question is this:—To which are *you* looking? to things seen, or things unseen? to earthly things, or to Jesus, to God, and to heaven? Remember, that Satan is quite satisfied if he can get you to *love* the world; for that will ruin your immortal soul. Remember, too, that the things which are seen are temporal. They last only for a little time. When sickness and death come, they can do nothing for you. Look not, then, at such poor things; but look to Jesus your eternal Saviour; look to the eternal God, who in Jesus will be your kind Father; and look to heaven, the eternal home of all who love Jesus.

Temptation to Anger.

EPHESIANS IV. 26.

"Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath."—EPHES. iv. 26.

Is it, then, ever right to be angry, and can we ever be angry without sinning against God? Yes, we may; for St Paul says—"Be ye angry, and sin not." And we read, Mark iii. 5, that Jesus himself was once angry. But if it is sometimes right, and at other times sinful to be angry, how can we tell when we do well to be angry, and when we displease God by being so? Let me try to explain this to you, my dear child. I said just now that Jesus was once angry; why was He angry? Was it because His enemies reviled Him, and smote Him, and put a crown of thorns on His head, and pierced His hands and His feet? Oh, no! Jesus bore all this with perfect patience, and prayed for those who treated Him so cruelly—"Father, forgive them, for they

know not what they do." Jesus was not angry on account of anything that they did to Himself. He was angry because of the unbelief and hardness of their hearts. Can you see, then, when we may be angry? We ought not to be angry with those who are unkind to us, and do what we do not like. We ought not to be angry with sinners, but with *sin*. A great many people are angry with those who sin, but not with *sin* itself; whereas we ought to be angry with *sin*, but not with those whom sin has deceived. We ought to pity them, and pray for them. Now, if you are angry at *sin*, shall I tell you with whom you will be angry and displeased too? Perhaps you will say, "I know whom you mean—you mean Satan." No, I do not mean Satan, though he is very wicked; I mean "yourself." There is only one person in the world with whom *I* may be angry, and that person is *myself;* and there is only one person in the world with whom *you* may be angry, and that person is *yourself*. It is

better never to *frown;* but if ever you do *frown*, do not frown at *another*, but at *yourself*. It is better never to scold any one: but if you do scold, scold *your own heart*, and say, "Oh naughty, naughty heart!" It is better not to beat any one; but if your hand is lifted up to beat, beat *yourself*. Remember, then, dear child, that it is not always wrong to be angry. You may be angry with sin, and you may be angry with *yourself*. This is no sin—"Be ye angry, and sin not."

But there is another point which requires explanation. It is very difficult sometimes to prevent the feeling of anger rising up in the heart. It darts up so very quick, almost like a flash of lightning. Now if, when the angry feeling darts up, we do not indulge it, but try to overcome it at once, then it is not, I think, sin. It becomes sinful when we give way to it, and allow it to settle in our hearts; when we begin to look angry, and speak angry words. And so St Paul says, "Let not the sun go down

upon your wrath." It is as if he had said, "When an angry feeling springs up in your heart, do not sin by indulging and retaining it, but try to overcome it at once." If you will turn to Amos i. 11, you will see that God was displeased with Edom for this very thing; for they did not try to overcome anger; *many* suns rose and set, and they were angry still. "Thus saith the Lord, For three transgressions of Edom, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because he did pursue his brother with the sword, and did cast off all pity, and his anger did tear perpetually, and he kept his wrath for ever." Oh, it is very sad, and very sinful, when little children are unforgiving, and keep their anger like Edom—when they go to bed angry, and get up angry! If they retain their anger, shall I tell you what God will retain? God will retain their sins.

Now, what is it that makes people angry? It is impossible to tell you all the things which cause anger, because there are so many.

But if you will think, you will see, that it is not so much *great* things as *little* things which generally put people out of humour. A man travels by railway. Before the train has got very far, it runs into another train. There is a terrible crash, and his leg is broken. He is taken out of the crushed-up carriage. He does not murmur, he is not angry; but if the same man, by his own carelessness or the carelessness of some one else, were to lose a little box or bag, he would, very likely, be very angry, and grumble very much. Let me tell you a true story about a woman, who was very angry about a *very little thing*. A clergyman was once asked to visit a person who was dying. She had been very constant to her church, and had often received the holy communion, but she was very self-righteous. She never liked the minister's preaching, because he addressed his hearers as sinners, and she always thought herself a very good woman. When the clergyman entered the sick chamber, she took good care to speak first.

"Do not speak to me," she said, "about sin and repentance! I was well brought up, and have never committed any sin in my life. Say something comforting." "Happy woman!" said the clergyman, "never to have committed one sin. Hitherto I have only known one who was without sin, and that was our Saviour, Jesus Christ. For myself, I must confess before God that I am a wretched sinner, and have nothing good in me." The dying woman had heard enough, and tried to turn the conversation. Near her bed sat a little child. She told the child to bring her a cup. The poor child in doing so dropped the cup, and broke it all to pieces. It could only have cost a few pence. The sick woman, however, who thought herself without sin, burst into a furious passion. Forgetting the presence of God, and unchecked by the presence of her minister, she called the poor child a great many names. Oh, does it not shew the great power of sin, that at such a time, on a dying bed, a person could be so angry

about so *small* a thing. Servants ought to be very careful not to break their master's and mistress's things; and little children ought to be very careful not to break windows in their play. But if anything belonging to you is broken by accident, do not get angry; for the loss of temper is much worse than the loss of a little money. The loss of temper is a *sin*. The loss of anything that is broken is only an inconvenience. When you stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, you will not think about broken cups and playthings, or about lost boxes, but you will remember every fit of passion that has not been washed away in the blood of Jesus.

Be watchful, then, my dear child, in *little* things. If *little* things do not make you angry, you will be able to bear great things in calmness and silence.

But some people say, "Oh, my temper is so very bad, I shall never be able to conquer it! It is no use trying to do so." It is very wrong to speak in that way. It

may sometimes be very difficult, but i
never impossible to control our temp
Let me give you a proof of this. Sup
a bad-tempered child were brought into
presence of the Queen. Do you thin
he were provoked, that he would get in
passion before the Queen? Oh, no!
would control his temper, for he would
like the Queen to see him in a pass
Now, that shews that he can control
temper, if he likes. Let, then, such a c
believe and feel that God is always pre
and always sees him, and he will con
his temper every day. Never, then, th
dear child, that it is impossible to overc
a bad temper. If you try to overcom
in the right way, you will be quite sur
succeed.

Let me try to explain to you how
overcome it.

Now, the first thing is to ask God
teach you to feel how very *sinful* an
is; for if you think lightly of the sin, y
will not be really earnest in your effo

to overcome it. Unsubdued anger is a great sin: it displeases God; it ruffles the soul; it hinders prayer. As St Paul says, (1 Tim. ii. 8,) "I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." Look back, dear child. Have you not often indulged naughty tempers? Have you not been angry about *little* things? And have not those bad tempers darkened your heart, and kept you from praying in a calm and trustful spirit? Oh, should you not be very sorry for these sins? Should it not grieve you very much that you have been so unlike the gentle Jesus? Oh, yes, it should. Turn, then, to Jesus. Ask Him to wash away these sins in His blood, which cleanses from all sin. You cannot overcome in the future without finding forgiveness for the past.

There was once a little girl, whose name was Mary Groves. One day she grew very angry on some trifling occasion. Her cousin said to her, "Mary, what would

mamma say?" The little girl look thoughtful, and, turning to her cou said, "What would Jesus say? Let us kneel down and ask Jesus to forgive m The four children knelt down; and af prayer little Mary became quite good a happy. Whenever Satan tempts you lose your temper, always think, with li Mary, "What will Jesus say?" and kn down and pray for forgiveness.

Then, too, besides praying for *forgi ness*, ask Jesus to give you *grace* to c trol your temper. It is quite wonde what the grace of God can do in our sin hearts. It can make the most passion and violent as meek and gentle as a li lamb. So, however bad your temper n naturally be, you need not despair. C cast yourself on Jesus, and He will c out the evil temper. I once heard o gentleman, who was naturally passion He became a true Christian, and from t time, for above twenty years, he was ne once known to lose his temper.

What a beautiful example! Perhaps there is some little child here who will never be angry again. What a happy thing this would be! Look, dear child, to Jesus, and try never to be angry again, excepting with sin and with yourself, even if you live thirty or forty years longer. Which do you think is the greatest thing —to take Sebastopol, or to control your temper? I think, the last; for anger has conquered the greatest conquerors. The first Napoleon was a great conqueror, but his temper conquered him oftener than he conquered his enemies. If, then, you conquer anger, you conquer the conqueror of conquerors. And so the Bible says, (Prov. xvi. 32,) "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty: and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."

Temptation to Sloth.

PROVERBS XXII. 13.

"The slothful man saith, There is a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets."—PROV. xxii. 13.

HAVE you ever seen a lion? Many of you, no doubt, have seen one. Where was it? It was in a great cage, with thick iron bars. Perhaps, when you first saw it, you felt a *little* fear; but when you looked at the thick bars, which kept him a prisoner, and knew that its keeper was there, all your little fears passed away. But suppose this lion, instead of being in a cage, were free, and were to crouch down just opposite your door, and stay there day and night, then you would be really frightened; you would be afraid to look at it through the door, but would go up-stairs and look down upon it from one of the upper windows. What an annoyance would that lion be to you! You wish, perhaps, to go out and take a nice walk; but the lion

is in the way. Some of your friends have asked you to a children's party, and you long to go; but there is the horrid lion. How glad you would be to see him put in a great cage! for whilst he is free, you are a prisoner; but if he were made a prisoner, you would be free.

Now, I have been speaking to you, my dear children, about a *real* lion. But the slothful man's lion is not a *real* lion; it is a *fancy* lion. He fancies a lion in the street when there is none. How is it that he has so strange a fancy? It is because he is *slothful*, and he does not like the trouble of doing things. The *lion in the street* is his excuse for stopping where he is, and doing nothing.

Now, before I explain to you some common kinds of sloth, it may be well to look a little at the *character* of the slothful man. Many passages of Scripture speak of him. Turn, for instance, to Prov. xiii. 4,—"The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing." Now, what do we learn

about the sluggard from this important verse? You will say, He "desireth." Yes; and what does that signify? It means, that he has desires or wishes. A sluggard, then, is not necessarily a man who is wholly indifferent; who cares for nothing; who is utterly destitute of feeling. He may have as many desires and wishes as the most active and successful of men. He may *wish* to be rich, though he will never be so, if it depends upon his own efforts. He may *wish* to be very different from what he is, though each new year as it comes finds him the same, or worse, because he makes no effort, in dependence on the grace of God, to overcome his sins. And he may wish to go to heaven, though it is certain that he will never go there, unless his heart is changed by the Holy Spirit, and he overcomes his self-indulgence, and follows Jesus in a self-denying spirit. Dear children, never think that it is enough to have good desires. The *slothful* man has these. They will do you no good,

unless they lead you to Jesus, who will take away your sins.

Now turn to Prov. xii. 27,—"The slothful man roasteth not that which he took in hunting." This teaches us something more about the slothful man. Can you see what it is? Something arouses him for the moment to exertion. He rises from his bed, where he wastes so much precious time. He makes an effort—he succeeds. Is this the beginning of a new life to him? Well if it were. The fit of sloth comes on again. He lets the advantages which he had gained slip by. A second effort seems too great—he sinks back again into his former state of torpor—he "roasteth not that which he took in hunting."

Another feature in his character is, that he does not see his own folly. Others perceive plainly enough that he is on the way to temporal and eternal ruin, but he does not perceive it, and he thinks that he knows better than others. It is of no use to talk to him or try to reason with him. He can

give no reason—yet he will think himself wiser than you. So Solomon says, (Prov. xxvi. 16,) "The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason."

Now, can you remember the three points in the character of the sluggard which we have gathered out of Scripture. The first was, that he is a man who is not without desires and wishes. The second was, that even when by some unusual exertion he has gained advantages, he lets them slip away. And the last was, that notwithstanding his faults, he has a high opinion of himself.

But I promised to explain to you some different kinds of sloth. It will be enough to speak of *three—intellectual* sloth, *moral* sloth, and *spiritual* sloth. I shall say very little on intellectual and moral sloth, as there is much to be said about *spiritual sloth.*

1. Do you understand what I mean by *intellectual* sloth? It is a dislike to ex-

ercise the mind. Now, this dislike shews itself chiefly in two ways.

First, It shews itself most frequently in a dislike of all study. How many children would rather be always at play than exert themselves to improve their own minds! They are very active at all kinds of games, and do not mind fatigue of body. When asked to play, they do not make any excuses. There is no lion in the way between them and their play-ground. But tell them to prepare their lessons, and their countenance falls. Excuses come into their minds. "They are so tired," and "The lesson is so difficult." "Perhaps after rest they will be able to prepare it better." And so they put off. There is a lion in the way between them and their books. You know what that lion is. It is *intellectual* sloth. My child, drive it away. Pray earnestly to God for the gift of His spirit, that you may overcome sloth. Those who love Jesus are not slothful.

The second way in which this sloth

shews itself is in using the *memory* instead of the *mind.* It is easier to *remember* than to *think.* And so, many children who do not like the trouble of *reflecting* on what they read, satisfy themselves with trying to remember what they learn, and with being able to repeat it in the same words. I do not mean that you should neglect your memory; you should try to strengthen it. But you should cultivate your mind too. You should think about what you read, and are taught. You should have some thoughts of your own about it. Do not be afraid of the difficulty. The lion is an *imaginary* one, and when you have gained the habit of *thinking,* you will enjoy every study much more. You will enjoy reading the Bible, if you are taught by the Spirit, for you will be able to *fix your* thoughts on Jesus.

2. Now, let me say a few words about *moral* sloth. I dare say you know what it means. It is that kind of sloth which withholds persons from trying to remedy their fail-

ings. Suppose, now, that you have some moral failing—it may be pride, or obstinacy, or violence of temper, or sulkiness, or want of truth and straightforwardness of conduct, or a disposition to tease your fellow-pupils, and to quarrel yourself, or make others quarrel. Whichever of these it be, your parents and teachers point it out to you. They shew you how sinful it is, and what misery it will bring you in this world, and the world to come, unless you overcome it. Now, if you neglect their warnings, you are *morally slothful.* You indulge a sin, because you find it difficult to conquer it. But why is it that you find it so difficult to overcome it? It is because you trust in your own strength. Would you lean upon a broken reed? No! because it would snap asunder, and its sharp edges would pierce your hand. Your own strength and resolutions are no better. If you lean on them you will fall. To overcome *moral sloth,* and other besetting sins, *you must* pray to God to give you a new

heart, and to wash you in the blood of Jesus. Then the strength of Jesus will be yours — then His victory will be yours. And His love, shed abroad in your heart, will make you earnest, instead of slothful—watchful, instead of slumbering—and delight to overcome sin, instead of slothfully indulging in it.

3. And now we come to the most important kind of sloth—*spiritual sloth.* It is such sloth as leads us to neglect our souls, and Jesus the Saviour of our souls. A child or grown-up person may be very anxious to get knowledge, and, what is more, very earnest in trying to overcome his faults; but he may with all this neglect *his soul*—may find spiritual things dull and stupid.

But let me point out a little more at length how we may find out whether we are spiritually slothful or not. Now, you know, dear child, that God commands us to pray, and has given us many encouragements to draw near to Him. Turn to Jer. xxxiii. 3,—"Call unto me, and I will answer

thee, and shew thee great and hidden things, which thou knowest not." Again, (Isa. lxv. 24,) "And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." What beautiful promises! Should you not like to know the Queen? and would it not please you if she were to say to you in a kind voice, "Whatever you want, come to me for it, and I will get it for you?" Now, God is the King of kings, and He invites us to come to Him for everything that we want. If you went to the Queen very often, after a time she might grow weary, and not wish you to come again. But our great King is never weary, and loves to give us everything that is good for us. Oh, should we not love prayer? Should we not often go to our secret chambers to pour out our hearts to God? Oh, yes! we should; and yet how many do not like prayer! Are there not many children who, when the time for prayer comes, see a *lion in* the way? You put it off until the

morrow, or until you get into bed, and then you are too sleepy; or, if you pray on your knees, as you ought, you cut your prayers short, or say them very fast. Oh, this is spiritual sloth! Such prayers displease God. How can your soul prosper when you neglect prayer, or pray in this slothful way?

Again, this spirit of sloth prevents many from going to church. The mothers say that they have so many children to look after, and the fathers that they are tired by working for them. Both generally say that they read their Bibles at home. Is this enough? No. Suppose I were to say to my servant, "Will you fetch me such a book from my library, and a rose from my garden? He goes. Soon he returns. He has the right book, but instead of the sweet rose he brings a nettle. Is he an obedient servant? Should I be satisfied? No. Can, then, God be satisfied with such services? Read the Bible every day, and on Sunday as well; but whenever there is

Divine service in your church, never miss it, unless you or one of your family is very ill.

Now, this spiritual sloth is a terrible enemy, and it is so because it works so *secretly* and *silently* in the heart. Let me give you an illustration of this. A missionary in India once sat down to tea with two gentlemen. It was at the cold season of the year, so they moved the table from the centre near to the fireside. On a sudden, a few pieces of plaster fell. The missionary looked up, and saw that a large beam was giving way. He instantly cried out "The beam is coming down upon us." All rushed out. Scarcely had they crossed the threshold when the beam, twenty-one feet long, broke in the centre, and fell with a tremendous crash, bricks and mortar falling with it. Had the three gentlemen remained where they were, all would have been killed. What a mercy! But what was the cause of the fall of the beam? One perhaps will say, "Oh, it was very old!" An-

other, "It was not thick enough." No, these were not the reasons. There are some white ants in India. They never eat the outside of a beam, but always the inside, and so by degrees they hollow it out, whilst to the eye the beam looks as strong as ever. It was these white ants that did all the mischief. Now, spiritual sloth is very like them. By degrees it eats all strength out of the heart. Dear child, watch against it. Flee to Jesus, whenever you feel it coming. Hold fast to Jesus in your heart, and cry to God for His Holy Spirit to make and keep you awake. Then there will be no imaginary lions in the way. But Jesus, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, shall be your defence.

Temptation to Deceit.

EPHESIANS IV. 25.

" Wherefore, putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another."—EPH. iv. 25.

I HAVE tried to point out to you, my dear child, some of the temptations to which you are exposed in this sinful world, and have urged you to flee to Jesus for strength to overcome them. Has any little child done so, and said in the hour of temptation, " Lord Jesus, save me?" Happy child! Jesus will keep thee, and make thee, weak as thou art, even more than conqueror.

But I have not spoken to you yet about two very important temptations. If you were attentive to the text, you know what one of them is—" Lying." St Paul says, " putting away lying."

Now, you know what " lying " is. " Yes," you will say, " it is telling a falsehood."

Quite right. And what is the guilty member that tells the falsehood? The tongue. Yes, that *unruly* member, which St James says is set on fire of hell. The tongue is a *little* thing, but it often tells *great* lies, and does *great* mischief. But I wish you to understand, that there are some kinds of lying with which the tongue has nothing to do. For instance, there is the *lying look* and the *lying act*. So, then, there are three different kinds of lying. *Lying words* —here the tongue is the guilty member; *lying looks*—in these the eye is the guilty member; and *lying acts*—in which sometimes, but not always, the hand is the guilty member. Oh, what danger are we in, dear child! Of all sins, this sin of deceit and lying seems to be the most common. And so we read, (Psalm lviii. 3,) "The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they are born." And how do they shew this? *Speaking lies.* Remark these words, my dear child, "speaking lies." When a little infant cannot speak,

it shews the sinfulness of its heart by jealousy and passion; but when it gets older, and learns to talk, its *first* sin is generally a *lie*. It is a happy thing when that first sin is discovered, and when the parent chastens his child for it; otherwise one lie will follow another, until it grows into a habit. We once knew a mother who discovered her little son in telling a falsehood. She corrected him with some severity. He never told a lie again, but was ever afterwards remarkable for his truthfulness. Parents, begin early in dealing with this sin. However young your child, do not pass over the *first* lie.

But you must not think, my dear child, that God will overlook this sin, and think lightly of it, because it is so common. God hates it very much. He is a God of truth. If, then, you tell falsehoods, you are not like Jesus, but like—Whom? Can you tell me? If you will turn to John viii. 44 you will see. "The devil." What does Jesus say of him? He says that "there

is no truth in him." And that "when he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." Whenever, then, you are tempted to tell a falsehood, think within yourself, "Oh, no, I won't do it; for if I do, I shall be quite unlike Jesus, and I shall be like His great enemy, Satan." Now, let us turn to another passage, which shews how God hates falsehood. You will find it, (Prov. xii. 19,) "The lip of truth shall be established for ever: but a lying tongue is but for a moment." And again, (ver. 22,) "Lying lips are abomination unto the Lord: but they that deal truly are his delight." So likewise, (chap. vi. 16, 17,) "These six things doth the Lord hate; yea, seven are an abomination to him." And what is the second of these? "A lying tongue." These texts abundantly shew how very hateful all deceit and falsehood is to God.

Now, do you remember, or have you *already* forgotten, in how many different

ways we may utter falsehood? It may be by a *word*, or it may be by a *look*, or it may be by an *act*. Let me try to illustrate these; and we will begin by "lying words."

Some people are so wicked as to tell lies without any motive. There is something most shocking in this. But it usually arises from their having been allowed to utter falsehoods, when young, without correction; and so they go on from bad to worse, until at last they seem scarcely to see the difference between falsehood and truth, and no one can trust what they say. But children usually have some reason why they tell a lie. It is generally to *conceal some fault* which they have committed. A father tells his son not to go to some place, or not to touch something lest he should spoil it, or not to associate with another boy, who is wicked and always getting into mischief. For a time the son remembers the father's commands. He is bright and happy, and always meets his father with pleasure. But after a while a

season of temptation comes. He meets his former companion, whom he has long avoided. Satan tempts him to disobey his father, and go with him. He goes, and they get into mischief. On his return home his heart is no longer light. His conscience troubles him. He dreads seeing his father. "Shall I confess what I have done?" he thinks within himself. Pride says, "No." The fear of punishment says, "No." Satan whispers in his heart, "No." And his own evil heart listens to these suggestions, and says, "No." He hopes to escape discovery. But only a few days pass away when his father hears of his disobedience. He calls his son before him, and tries to get him to confess his sin. But the son, instead of confessing, denies the act of disobedience altogether. Oh, how sinful! and how one sin leads on to another! Beware, dear child, of disobedience; for if Satan succeeds in making you disobedient, he will try his utmost to get you to conceal *it by a lie.*

Again, vanity and lightness of mind is another cause of falsehood. Some children like to shew themselves forth before other children. One child wishes to be thought "pretty," another to be thought "bold," another to be thought "clever and amusing." Now, when these children tell a story about themselves, they often add something or omit something to make it more striking, and to bring more glory to themselves; or if they are overfond of talking, they will exaggerate from mere lightness of mind.

One day a little boy about six years old, whose name was Theodore Hippel, went to take tea with a married sister. Although so young, he talked a great deal. Whilst telling some story, or giving some information, he said what he knew was untrue. Now, Theodore, though too light-minded, was not a wicked boy. So as soon as he thought what he had done, he was distressed. When he went home, he was very unhappy. He could neither eat nor sleep.

He tried to pray, but could not, for he felt that God was angry with him, and that what he called his guardian spirit had left him. His agony of mind became so great, that he could bear it no longer. He sent for his mother, and confessed his falsehood, and then begged to be taken to his sister's that he might confess it to her also. Then he was able to pray, and felt cheerful and happy again. My dear child, if ever Satan succeeds in making you tell a lie, confess it at once. Go to God, through Jesus Christ, and open your heart to Him. But you must also confess it to the person to whom you have told it; otherwise, God will not hear your prayer.

But those who love Jesus, love truth. They hate lies, and try not to exaggerate either to get praise themselves or to amuse others. There was once a little girl who loved Jesus very much. Nothing gave her so much pleasure as to hear people speak about Him. I do not know how old she *was; but she* must have been very young,

for she could not write herself. When she was at school, and wished to write to her parents, her teacher wrote for her; but she told her teacher what she wished to say. This little girl was always anxious to speak the exact truth. She was afraid to say more than she felt. Sometimes it seemed to her that she had used too strong a word. Then she said to her teacher, "Oh, strike that word out; I do not feel so much in my heart." This love of truth is very beautiful. When you have written a letter, dear child, read it over carefully before you send it, and if you find that some word expresses more than you feel, strike it out, even though the stroke may spoil the appearance of the letter. There is one exception to this. We mention it because it sometimes troubles over-scrupulous consciences. We usually begin our letters with "Dear," "Dear Sir," or "Dear Madam," and often end them with "Yours truly." Now, suppose that you are writing to a person who, you feel, is not dear to you; does truth

require you to strike out those words? We think not. It is the custom to use them. It would be contrary to Christian courtesy in some cases to omit them. And we are expressly commanded (1 Pet. iii. 8) "to be courteous." Then, too, we have more than one instructive example in Scripture. Turn, for instance, to Dan. vi. 21. How does Daniel address the king? "O king, live for ever." What made him speak to a heathen monarch in that strange way? It was because it was the custom—a way of address commonly used.

Let us now pass on to the *lying look*. Is it possible to tell a falsehood by a look? Yes, the eye speaks. Suppose you are walking with a boy who is not particular about the truth; you meet another boy with whom your companion is acquainted, and stop to talk. In the course of conversation your companion says what is untrue, and what you also know to be untrue. The boy to whom it is addressed ap*pears in*credulous; upon remarking which,

your companion looks to you to confirm his story. You are afraid to expose him, and yet do not like to tell a direct lie. You remain silent, but give a *look of assent.* The deceived boy watches your countenance, and understands that *look.* He believes the falsehood, which he doubted a minute before; your look has made him believe a falsehood. It was a *look of deceit.* My dear child, never *look a lie.* Think of Jesus. His look was a *look of compassion.* Turn to Mark viii. 2,—"I have *compassion* on the multitude." It was a *look of sympathy.* For when He stood by the grave of Lazarus "Jesus wept." It was sometimes a *look of grief,* (Mark iii. 5,) "And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being *grieved* at the hardness of their hearts." It was a *look* of *gentle rebuke* to the fallen Peter, (Luke xxii. 61,) "And the Lord turned and *looked* upon Peter." And that look was enough to melt Peter's heart. It was always the *look of truth,* (John xviii. 37,) "To this end was I born, and for this

cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth." These are but a few of the *looks* of Jesus, of the changes in His calm and holy eye. But one look—alas! too common in the world—was never seen in Him,—the *look of deceit.* Oh, pray, dear child, for the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, to make you like Jesus, to make you *speak* truth, *look* truth, and *act* truth.

Lastly, Let me say a few words about *acting falsehood.* It would be easy to give many instances. Those do so who make use of false weights in their shops. And no less those who adulterate food. But we turn to another example more suited to children, especially to children at school. We have ourselves known many instances of idle children, who, instead of doing their own exercises, get others to help them, or even do the whole for them. And then they give up their exercise to the master or mistress, as if it were entirely their own doing—and perhaps get praise *for it.* This is clearly to act a lie, and is

very sinful. An excellent head-master of a public school preached a sermon on the words, "Be sure your sin will find you out." And he gave this act of deceit as an instance, and said, that it was a sin which would find the sinner out. After service, two boys, of whom he had always had the highest opinion, came to him, and with much sorrow and shame confessed, that they had got others to do their exercises for them. "But now," they said, "we feel convinced of its sinfulness, and are resolved not to do so again." It is even a worse act of deceit, when children look over each others papers in an examination, and slyly copy them. If there are any children here who are guilty of either of these acts of deceit, oh, we urge you most solemnly to confess it. Confess it to your master or mistress—but confess it also to God. Tell Jesus of your sin, and never rest until His precious blood has cleansed your heart and conscience, and brought peace to your soul.

Dear child, put away lying in word, in

look, and in act. See with what earnestness David expostulates with the wicked concerning this sin, (Ps. iv. 2,) "How long will ye love vanity, and seek after leasing?" or falsehood. If you value your precious souls, put away lying; if you wish to escape the lake of fire, put away lying, for we are expressly told, (Rev. xxi 8,) that "all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." If you wish to go to Jesus when you die, and to be happy for ever with Him, put away lying.

And in order to put it away come to Jesus now, and give Him your heart. For those who love Jesus have power given to them to overcome this sin. Christ puts the Spirit of truth in their hearts, and the indwelling Spirit teaches them to speak true words, to look true looks, and do true acts. Oh! pray often with the psalmist, (Ps. cxix. 29,) "Remove from me the way of lying;" and again, (Ps. cxx. 2,) "Deliver *my soul*, O Lord, from lying lips, and from *a deceitful* tongue."

Temptation to Fear Man.

PROVERBS XXIX. 25.

" The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe."—PROV. xxix. 25.

YOU know, I dare say, dear child, what a snare is. It is something by means of which men cunningly contrive to catch different birds and animals. There is a little bird which lives upon the downs. It is very timid, and would not let you come near it; indeed, it is so timid, that it is afraid of the clouds as they cross the sun on a bright day; so when a cloud passes over, it runs to some shelter. The shepherds, observing this, dig a little hole —a very little one. Then they put a noose in it; and then they lay the piece of grass, which they had carefully cut out all in one bit, over the top. When the cloud crosses the sun, the little bird runs into this shelter. Ah! it does not know that a snare

is there. Its head gets entangled in the noose. It struggles; but this draws the snare closer. It is soon strangled, and dies. That is one kind of snare. And if you have read your Bible with care, you must have observed how often allusions are made to this kind of snare. Turn to Ps. xci. 3,—"Surely he shall deliver thee from the *snare of the fowler*." Turn now to Ps. cxxiv. 7,—"Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the *snare of the fowlers:* the snare is broken, and we are escaped." Solomon speaks of another snare, (Eccles. ix. 12),—"For man also knoweth not his time: as the *fishes that are taken in an evil net*, and as the birds that are caught in the snare; so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them." Now, children like to hear about birds and fishes, and how they are caught. But *mark*. Why did David and Solomon speak of these *natural* objects? It was to explain spiritual things. David *wished* to make us feel how great had

been his danger, and how wonderful his deliverance by the power and love of God; and Solomon wished to shew how *sudden* are oftentimes God's judgments—like a *net* thrown over fish.

Do you remember, dear child, any great judgment which is yet to come upon the earth? Yes, the second coming of Jesus; and Jesus says, (Luke xxi. 35,) "For as a *snare* [or net] shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth." Yet, if you love Jesus, you need not fear. He himself will shelter you under His wings.

But there are other snares besides these. There is one who has thousands and thousands of them. He is *invisible*, and so he can set his snares without being seen; he is so *skilful*, that he knows which snare to choose; he is so *persevering*, that if one snare fails he will try another; and he is so *crafty*, that, "transforming himself into an angel of light," he ensnares many souls without their knowing it. You know who

this is, dear child? It is Satan. He has snares for very little children, who are still with their dear parents. He has *snares* for bigger children, who are at school—he tempts them to choose bad companions. He has many snares for young men—he tempts them to vice; and for young women—he tempts them to vanity. The suffering poor he tempts to steal; and the rich, to spend everything selfishly upon themselves. Those who are strong he tempts to forget Jesus, and the sick he tempts to be impatient.

Now, there are several things which lead people into these snares of the wicked. Turn to 1 Tim. vi. 9, "They that will be rich fall into temptation, and a *snare*"—so that the love of money is one thing. Then our text shews us another,—"The *fear of man* bringeth a snare." The fear of man! What a strong feeling it is! It has mastered at times the very strong as well as the weak. Look at Abraham, how *strong* he was in faith! St Paul tells us,

(Rom. iv. 18,) "that he hoped against hope." Yet when he went down into Egypt, he was afraid that he would be killed on account of his wife. So he deceived the king of Egypt by saying what was practically not true. This was the fear of man prevailing for the moment over the fear of God. Then, again, remember Peter. Peter was often very bold. He threw himself into the sea to meet his beloved Saviour. He expressed his readiness to die with Jesus. Yet when Jesus was seized, when Peter saw Him ill-treated by every one, reviled, scorned, and persecuted—when warming his feet by the fire in the palace of the high priest, in the midst of the enemies of Jesus, he heard their bitter words, his heart lost its courage. Just then it was that, as St Luke says, (xxii. 56,) a certain damsel looked earnestly upon him, and said, "This man was also with Him." Peter, alas! denied Jesus. Was not this sad? He said, "Woman, I know Him not." Then came another, and charged

him with being a follower of Jesus. And about an hour after, another made the same charge, saying that Peter was a Galilean. Each time he denied Jesus. Oh! where was Peter's conscience?—where his love?—where his courage? All seemed put out by the fear of man. But were they so, dear child? What do you think? Not altogether. What was it that aroused his conscience, kindled his weak love, and reanimated his courage?—Was it an angry rebuke from the lips of Jesus? No. It was a tender, sorrowful *look*. It melted Peter's heart. He went out and wept bitterly. What rapid changes in Peter's mind! When he entered that hall, he never dreamt of denying Jesus. Oh, no! But he sat with the ungodly. The fear of man led him to deny his Lord. For a while he lingered on in the hall with a hardened heart. Then a *look* from Jesus sent him to weep alone with a broken heart. Dear child, never be ashamed of *Jesus—of* Jesus who died for you. Why

should the presence of other boys or girls, though they be very wicked, make you afraid? How weak they are, and how mighty Jesus is! Oh, cleave to Jesus with all your heart and soul, and flee to Him in the hour of temptation!

But let me now, dear child, describe to you a case, which, alas! is only too common. A little boy leaves home to go to school for the first time. He is not a religious boy; he does not know and love Jesus; but he is a steady and well-principled boy, not inclined to vice, but preferring that which is outwardly good. This boy goes to school: there is no difficulty in finding companions; many boys seem anxious for his friendship. Now, it is not the best boys in a school, but often the worst, who are the quickest to take up a new boy. It was so in this case. Instead of waiting, and trying to find out the character of the boys, who were so ready to make him their companion, he makes the fatal choice at once, and casts in his lot with them. Oh,

how foolish this was! Never be in a *hurry* to make friendships; it is a matter of great importance. Pray to God to guide you. Wait, wait a long time, rather than be rash. The friendships which come last are often the best.

But this little boy was rash. He knew nothing of the world, and did not make the Bible his guide. What was the consequence? He fell into a bad set. Now, in such a set of boys, there is always one who is leader. He is generally strong, daring, reckless, and quick to propose wicked things to the other boys; and those qualities give him such influence, that the rest generally yield. At first, our little boy did not perceive the wickedness of the set into which he had fallen. Sin hid its head. It was by degrees that it shewed itself, until one day he was not only asked but expected to take part in a wicked scheme proposed by the leading boy. All the boys were ardently in its favour. What was to be done? His conscience remonstrated;

besides, he had no taste for vice; others looked for pleasure in the sin, he with his feelings could look for none. The other boys, seeing his hesitation, gathered around him; some encouraged him to come, others ridiculed his hesitation. The leader said, in a firm tone, "We are all going—you must come." The fear of man prevailed. The little boy did not look to Jesus, and so being all weakness, (John xv. 5,) he fell. He went with these sinners, did as they did, and became ruined. At any moment he might have left them, but there was the *fear of man* in his heart; and the longer he walked with them as friends, the more difficult it was to break away from them, and so he resigned himself to evil companions and a sinful life.

Perhaps this may be in part or in whole the history of some boy here. If so, let me speak a few affectionate words to that boy's conscience. Look back. Think of the day when you first left home; no vice then darkened your conscience or sullied your

character. But now, what a change! Who hath made it? One or more evil companions. Oh, remember whence thou art fallen, and turn to Jesus! The eye that looked on Peter is looking on you. Christ is ready to receive you, if now this moment you repent—if now this moment you cast yourself at your Saviour's feet in earnest prayer—if now at once you forsake your evil companions. "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed." (Prov. xiii. 20.)

But how can we overcome this "fear of man," which exposes us to such dreadful snares? Many of you will answer, by the "fear of God." Yes, or as it says in our text, "by putting our trust in the Lord." To put our trust in God is not an easy thing. A great deal must take place in our hearts, before we can do so. We must be taught by the Holy Spirit to feel and be sorry for our sins. We must be washed *from our* scarlet sins in the crimson foun-

tain of Christ's precious blood. We must have new hearts—your natural hearts do not trust in God—they trust in themselves —trust in man—trust in their own strength —indeed, they are ready to trust in anything rather than Jesus. It is the new heart that *loves* Jesus, (1 John,) that *leans* on Jesus, (Song of Solomon,) that abides in Jesus, that trusts in Jesus. It says to itself, "What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee." Now, this calm and holy trust in God gives wonderful power over sin, and great courage in danger and temptation. It enabled Caleb and Joshua to stand firm when all the other spies brought up an evil report of the land. They were not afraid of being stoned to death. You will remember other beautiful instances in Scripture. So I will tell you an anecdote about a little boy in whom "trust in God" had cast out the "fear of man."

A great many years ago there lived a wicked Emperor of Rome—and at the same time there also lived this boy. The name

of the Emperor was Diocletian, and of the boy, who was of good family, Pancratius. He heard the gospel preached at Rome. God touched his heart, and he learned to love Jesus, and great was his love. The Emperor heard that he was a Christian, and sent for him. He was pleased at his appearance, for he was a handsome boy. He tried to get him to worship the false gods of Rome. But Pancratius answered, "I wonder that you who are so intelligent should worship such wicked men; as for me, I shall always love and worship Jesus." Diocletian ordered his head to be struck off on the spot. So courageously died this youthful martyr of fourteen. Trust in Jesus carried him through all. And now, look for a moment at the beautiful promise, "He shall be safe." What a promise for such a world as this! yet He who promises it *will* fulfil it, because He is *faithful*. He *can* fulfil it, because He is mighty to save. Oh! trusting, loving child, keep close to *Jesus*, and He will spread out His wings

over you, He will place His everlasting arms underneath you, He will hold you in His pierced hand, and you will be *safe*—*safe* from the fear of man, from the snares of the devil, from your own evil heart, from bad companions, and from every evil word and work.

THE END.

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